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TO

LORD SUFFIELD.

On his Speech, on the Resolutions and on other matters which took place at a Meeting at North Erpingham, in the County of Norfolk, on Friday the 17th of January 1823.

Kensington, 28 January 1823.

LORD SUFFIELD,

I HAVE before me, in the Norfolk Chronicle and Norwich Gazette, of the 25th of January, a report of the above stated matters. In commenting upon this report, and proceeding upon the supposition that it is true, it will be impossible for me to speak of you with too little ceremony, or too much contempt. But, though I shall not overlook the slanders which you are reported to have heaped upon myself. My main object is to show your manifest insincerity with regard to the cause

of reform, and your not less manifest wish to reduce *unjustly* the interest of the national debt.

The meeting at which you figured, is called a Meeting of the *Hundred*. It was, it appears, held in a *barn* near Cromer. What a pity that you do not seem to like a hall so well as a barn! We shall find, however, the speeches and other matter put forth upon this occasion, quite worthy of a place which is usually the residence of *owls* and *bats*; birds which shun the light; which get into holes and corners, while other birds delight in open day. A barn for your life! We shall soon see that as many owls might have made as good speeches and drawn up as good resolutions.

I do not like to fill up my space, or any part of it, with rubbish such as that which I find in the report of this meeting. But you have made so direct and so foul an attack upon me; you have done it in a manner at once so impudent and so mean; you have so libelled the county for having

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sanctioned fraud and breach of contract, while you yourself propose real fraud and real violation of contract, and are therein backed by parson Glover: in short, these proceedings present such a mass of inconsistency, impertinence, impudence, insolence, meanness, falsehood and folly, that I must give them entire to my readers. They surpass every thing of the kind, that I have ever seen or ever heard of. They go very far indeed towards proving (if any proof were wanting) that the county petition was wise and just. The reader will find them tedious and disgusting. But I must have them recorded in this work. To record them is due to the county of Norfolk; and recorded they must be. When I have inserted them, which I shall do, in as small a compass as the printer will enable me to do it; I shall take them and examine them from the beginning to the end. I shall not do as you have done by the county petition; that is to say, characterize it by vile names, but make no attempt to answer either fact or argument. If I impute motives to you, and give opinions as to your conduct, it will not be without giving reasons. I shall not deal in invective and slander; and shall say nothing that will not produce an impression that will stick by you. I take the history of these disgraceful proceedings from the newspaper before mentioned; and I am to be understood as speaking only on the supposition that this account is true. I must request the reader to go patiently through the reading of this account; for here he will find what sort of persons those are who are the enemies of the Norfolk petition. Here he will find, too, that these hypocritical enemies of the Norfolk petition, are *eager to reduce the interest of the debt*. Here the reader will discover, that they are all eager to reduce the interest of the debt; he will find that here is a Lord proposing to reduce the interest, and a *Parson* seconding the propositions; and he will find that the resolutions were carried unanimously, though there were six parsons present in the barn. The reader will find that here are a Lord, an Admiral and six Parsons, all assembled in a barn (along with their servants, very likely), to disavow, as *fraudulent and infamous*, a petition which prays for "an equitable adjustment of the claims of the public creditor;" here they are assembled in a barn to reprobate this petition as fraudulent, while they

themselves propose to pray, for a "*diminution of the interest now paid to the public creditor;*" or, for "*a direct tax upon the funds.*" These things are proposed by the Admiral and Lord, and seconded by a Parson; while they have the brass and the folly to reprobate the county petition, as inculcating *fraud and breach of contract.* I shall now insert the whole of the proceedings, fooleries and all, and then remark upon them in the manner that I have before described.

Meeting of the Hundred of North Erpingham.

ON Friday, the 17th inst. in pursuance of a Requisition, about 200 of the principal owners and occupiers of land in the above hundred assembled in a barn near Cromer Hall, "for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of speedily disavowing, in the most public manner, on the part of the inhabitants of the hundred, all participation in the tumultuous and disorderly proceedings, and the still more disgraceful results of the County Meeting held in Norwich, on Friday the 3d inst. affording the inhabitants of the hundred the earliest opportunity of protesting generally against the unjust, fraudulent, and revolutionary doctrines contained in a petition said to be voted at that meeting—and of doing that in reality for which the County Meeting was convened: viz. to take into consideration the present unprecedented state of agricultural distress, with its causes

"and probable means of remedy and alleviation."

Among those present were Lord Suffield, Admiral Lukin, the Rev. Geo. Glover, the Rev. J. Hepworth, Rev. P. Hudson, Rev. W. Gordon, Rev. J. B. Cremer, Rev. F. E. Arden; Messrs. J. Baker, Howes, T. Bullock, J. Weeds, W. Bess, B. Helsden, S. Sutton, W. Bacon, D. Chapman, J. Clarke F.G. Sanger, W. Barcham, B. Barcham, J. Bishop, J. Hilton, G. C. Tucker, James Emery, Wm. Long, Henry Sandford, Benjamin Rust, &c. &c.

Lord Suffield having been requested to take the Chair, his Lordship addressed the meeting to the following purport:—Gentlemen, I am sure that I may congratulate you upon the respectability of this meeting. In looking around me, I am most happy to be able to recognise all the individuals inhabiting this hundred, who from their property and large occupations are more peculiarly entitled to your respect. In convening this meeting you have taken the most obvious means of removing, from yourselves at least, all the reproach which must have come upon you, in common with the whole county of Norfolk, in consequence of the proceedings of the late county meeting. For the public press has continued ever since to teem with abuse upon this county for those proceedings: and we have indeed been held up as a laughing stock for the whole kingdom. I cannot, therefore, feel the least surprise that you should have been so eager to take the earliest opportunity of ridding yourselves of that onus of reproach. In recurring to the proceedings of the late county meeting, I cannot help expressing my belief that the clamour and tumult which ensued on that occasion, resulted from two circumstances. The first, an attempt to effect a compromise between the two leading parties in the State. This I am myself never an advocate for; I cannot understand how

it is to be done, and both preserve their consistency. There always will be two parties, and it is much better that they should be left to adhere to their peculiar opinions. Any attempt to compromise those opinions I have always thought ill advised as no good can possibly arise from it. The result of the late county meeting has fully proved this to be the case. For let us examine the circumstances. Of these two parties certain individuals meet and agree to compromise their opinions. One of these parties, have a very strong desire (and I am happy to say that it is a sentiment entertained by no inconsiderable portion of the country) for a Reform in Parliament: they, however, to pacify and please the individuals of the other party agree to drop all allusion to that subject at the meeting. But let us see the issue. When the Resolutions are brought forward which were agreed to by this Committee, and which have not the entire approbation of either side; a third party step forward, *create confusion*, gain their object, and laugh at both. (*Hear, hear, hear.*)—But the other circumstance to which I have alluded as having promoted the late tumult, I consider to be much more disgraceful, namely, *that pay had something to do with it.* For it is a very natural conclusion for any one to come to, that a man who, laying aside all feelings of honour and honesty, could for a moment *publicly advocate a system of paying nothing*, would be ready to *receive pay for saying any thing, and for doing any thing.* (*Hear, hear, and continued applause.*) Gentlemen, it is not my intention, and I am very far from wishing to attach this to any particular individuals. But I have received an account of a conversation which actually was heard to take place at the meeting, and upon the credibility of my informant I have

the greatest reliance. It was to this purport:—"John, what do you get for making such a noise?" The answer given was—"A shilling and as much beer as I can drink." Now we know that somebody must have paid for this beer, and some one must have given the shilling. I care not who were the promoters of the tumult, but I do say that whoever did it, it has been most disgraceful to the county. Gentlemen, we all know that whilst we are lamenting, there is a party who are rejoicing at the termination of the late meeting. There are persons to whom that tumultuous scene was highly gratifying. But why? only because it enables them to say that they are justified in their assertions, that a public assembly is not the means by which the real sense of the county is to be obtained. Unfortunately in this instance I am obliged to accord with their opinion, and to say, that a meeting so conducted is not the way by which the opinions of the county are to be ascertained. Gentlemen, I do not wish, and God forbid that I should be supposed to impute to the High Sheriff who presided on that occasion, the least intentional blame. Had I been placed in his situation, I might in all probability have acted as he did. But sitting down quietly, and coolly reflecting upon those proceedings as they have been recounted to me I must say, that it does appear that the High Sheriff had it in his power to have rendered that meeting as expressive of the sense of the county as any county meeting can be. It seems to me, that the High Sheriff had it in his power and ought to have ordered ten or a dozen of the persons observed most conspicuous in promoting the tumult to be taken into custody. And, if his doing so was not attended with the desired effect of obtaining silence and order, he ought in my opinion to have dissolved the meeting. For my-

self I should have had a strong desire that a particular individual should have been heard. *A report has been in circulation that persons of the description of Edwards and Castles were at the meeting. Perhaps the sentiments which the framer of the petition might have expressed in support of the document he produced and which was said to have been adopted, would have given further colour to this report.* To attempt to cry down any individual, whoever he may be, is not fair nor right. And so high a confidence have I in the good sense and feeling of the Yeomanry of the County of Norfolk; so fully am I assured of the firm attachment to the present constitution and structure of society, pervading that worthy class of individuals, that I should not have feared even the presence of *Edwards himself* amongst them.—*Had Edwards been left to himself he would soon have worked his own downfall.* Had the petition and all that a certain individual could have advanced in its favour been heard, I would have been content to have left it to the majority whether they would support such doctrines. As it was, however, a document was carried without being heard, which, had it been heard, I am perfectly assured would have been scouted by the meeting. The reason for the proceedings taking the turn they did, I am inclined to attribute therefore to *ill-judged zeal on the one side—to a certain quantity of pay; and to a certain degree of mismanagement on the part of the High Sheriff.*—Gentlemen, I consider you are entitled to know the grounds of my absenting myself from that meeting. I was *expressly ordered by my medical attendant not to stir out; and I believe that I am now amongst you at some little risk of my health; but I could not refuse myself the satisfaction of attending a meeting in my own hundred, and as it were at my own door.* Gentlemen, if I am *correctly informed*, the object of your meeting is in the

first place to disavow all connexion with the disorderly and tumultuous proceedings of the late county meeting. I believe there are many here present who can give valuable evidence of the tumult that existed on that occasion, and who will state to you that in their belief it was impossible for any person to understand upon what the meeting was voting. Such evidence from *such authority* is of great importance, as it will tend more than any thing to wipe off that stain with which, in the eyes of the kingdom at large, those proceedings have blemished this county. (*Hear, hear, hear.*) You are also met together to protest against a document which was brought forward and said to have been voted at that meeting, but which it is desirable that the whole kingdom should know you were not acquainted with until it appeared in the public prints; and that now you do know its tendency, you are eager to protest against the doctrines it contains, and utterly to disclaim them as the sentiments of the yeomen of Norfolk.—I consider it to be highly creditable to you to be the first to avow your horror of doctrines so *fraudulent and infamous*, and which publicly advocate the *subversion of society and the dissolution of EVERY contract between man and man.* Gentlemen, we know that even in the rudest ages of society, even before the introduction of money, that a degree of confidence was maintained and that a system of barter was allowed to exist. Are we then, a civilized nation, not to keep up to our contracts? Are we to destroy the confidence which now exists between one man and another? If you *dissolve all contracts*, what becomes of society? It is not, therefore, merely a question who shall be uppermost; not whether you or I shall live at Gunton, but whether any system of confidence is or is not to exist? For it is this system which the doctrines, contained in

the document before-mentioned, would break through, and which you are fully justified in considering to be revolutionary; and you are only acting like men in stating your abhorrence of them. Let us examine this document still further. Let us see the ruin and desolation which it would create, if what it proposes were ever adopted. It is recommended in this petition that Parliament shall sanction the suspension of *all payments* for one year. How many hundreds of individuals are there, widows and others, whose only source of income depends upon the present existing compacts. Can they starve for one year, can they exist for one year without eating and drinking? But, Gentlemen, we have not yet seen fully what is meant by this petition; and that the meaning and intention of its framer may remain no longer ambiguous, I shall quote to you a passage from his writings, which will clear up the matter at once.

[Here was inserted some of the basest lies and fabrications of the old Times newspaper.]

His lordship next proceeded to make some remarks upon the last-mentioned object, for which the present meeting had been called together—viz. that of “taking into consideration the present unprecedented state of agricultural distress, with its causes, and the probable means of remedy and alleviation.” He believed that there were many contributory causes to the distress of the agricultural interest; but he was also of opinion, that if sifted they would all be found to be bottomed on *taxation*. (*Hear, hear.*)—And that the remedy for a part, if not the whole of the evils under which they laboured, was to be sought in a diminution of *taxation*.—(*Applause.*)—Speaking of these contributory causes, his lordship said, that he had lately heard a very ingenious distinction attempted to be made by one of the

leading ministers of the day, between government taxes and general taxes. For himself he saw no distinction; and in answering the noble lord, he (Lord Suffield) brought forward as an argument, that though the poor rates might not be called government taxes, still they were increased and rendered more heavy by taxation. To prove this, it was only necessary to observe, that as the *national debt* increased the poor rates had also increased in proportion. And it must be a very uncommon coincidence that they should go so much *pari passu* if there was no connexion between them. From the period of the American war till within the last two years he had examined documents, and found that to have been the case.—This he stated in reply to the minister. The noble lord had, however, got up and told him, (Lord S.) that before he gave his information he ought to carry his calculations down to the last two years. Having made his calculations for a different purpose, he was not prepared for the noble lord. He had, however, taken his hint and examined the last two years; and he was still prepared to say, that the poor rates were regulated by the national debt, and that the only alteration in the proportion within the last two years was easily to be accounted for in the alteration of the currency.—His lordship then entered at some length on the subject of the altered state of the currency, and said that it was a fallacy to suppose that it had nothing to do with the present distress. The adoption of that measure was a great misfortune. The poor man was not now the richer because corn was sold for less, as his meal-money was reduced. He would ask whether the poor man was not worse off now than he was before. When corn was high a larger sum of meal-money was allowed him, and out of it he was enabled to make such a saving as would buy

him fuel and some few other necessities. But out of a smaller sum it was not possible to make that saving. That the poor rates were operated upon by the taxes must be self-evident. Even in the single article of tea, would be found a very strong illustration of his argument. Twenty years ago 17 ounces of tea might be bought for four shillings, but now 16 ounces, being one ounce less, were only to be had for double the money. This was one instance of the increase of the price of any article from the taxation and not from any dearness of the article itself. "*The remedy,* (Lord Suffield continued) *it is very plain, must be had by a diminution of taxation. But from a Parliament, constituted as the present Parliament is, that remedy is not to be expected. It is inconsistent with the present system of government to give up such a portion of the expenditure as to admit of any effectual diminution of taxation. The present government is founded upon that kind of basis, that large expenses are entailed upon it in the shape of patronage, which it is impossible for the ministers to get rid of, (if they would) and continue to hold the reins of government. That patronage is absolutely necessary to the ministers, has been openly avowed. One of them, in a debate in the last session, upon a motion for the abolition of some place, said it was not that such a place was necessary for the carrying on of government; but it was necessary as a counterpoise to ministers against the enlightened state of the people. I never in my life heard an avowal with greater pleasure than I did this; as it was an admission of the enlightened state of the country, and that it was necessary to have a counteracting influence. Gentlemen, we know the evils we labour under, and we know that the remedy is only to be had by a diminution of the public burdens;*

but we also see that the present system of government is so entangled that it is not able to afford us the remedy. Our only hope, therefore, is to effect an alteration in this system. But when I speak of altering the present system of government, I do not allude to a forcible resistance. To gain your object it is only necessary to have recourse to your constitutional rights and privileges. I should never be for advising any further than a constitutional resistance. It is on this account that I would wish to keep alive the feeling for reform. I would never let an opportunity slip of introducing the subject; in order that when the time shall come for electing your representatives, the public mind may be fully prepared to support only such persons as are favourable to a reform in parliament.—These are means which you have in your own hands, and the only ones I would ever recommend should be enforced. For, independent of the cruelty and wickedness attending a violent and unconstitutional resistance, how seldom does it happen that a revolution ultimately accomplishes what was intended by its promoters. — We have the example of France before our eyes. Oppression and tyranny caused a revolution in that country. The blood of thousands was spilt in the attempt to obtain what appeared so desirable—the overthrow of her oppressors. But what was gained in their stead?—a despot. Afterwards, indeed, that despot was beaten, but with him the country also, and the French have now the Bourbons back again.—His Lordship next proceeded to animadvert upon the absence of so many of the leading men of the county from the late meeting. He was aware, he said, that many individuals of high character and talent had absented themselves in consequence of the announcement that a certain individual would attend. Now, he (Lord Suffield) begged to remind those gentlemen,

that if they did desert their posts, (and their posts he considered to have been on the hustings at the county meeting) they ought not to feel the least surprise if they found themselves supplanted. For his part, he thought gentlemen were not to consult so much their own convenience; it was their duty to enter into public business of that kind, and as the leaders of their party to attend; for unless there were persons present qualified to give information, was it any wonder that the meeting should be carried away by a wrong current.—The Noble Lord next took occasion to allude to some remarks which were stated to have been made at the late Pitt dinner, by a person for whom he entertained the sincerest respect and regard. The person to whom he referred had said that he was sorry to see so many individuals whose rank, character and property entitled them to the highest respect and consideration, coalescing with the party who call themselves Radical Reformers: and further, “that the Whigs would not find it so easy a matter to shake off their Radical auxiliaries as they did to form a close association with them.” Now, he (Lord Suffield) wished to see a reform to put temptation out of the way of either party when in power. For himself, he liked to see the connexion between the Reformers and the Whigs, and he liked the Whigs because they could not shake off the Reformers. His chief confidence in a Whig administration rested upon this very fact, that they had so entangled themselves with the Reformers that they could not shake them off. He thought, therefore, that if they did come into power they would be the more likely to correct the abuses of the present administration. With regard to the regret expressed by the hon. individual, that persons intitled to his respect should have connected themselves with the Re-

formers, he (Lord Suffield) might be included amongst the number; he might therefore, he thought, be allowed to express his (Lord Suffield's) regret, that individuals of the hon. Gent.'s party should so connect themselves with such a system of abuse. But in doing this they would be both looking at the extreme of things: despotism on the one side, and revolution on the other. But it was only the *ultras* of either party who would wish to witness either the one or the other. His lordship was perfectly ready to acquit his hon. friend of any desire to see despotism introduced; might he not therefore expect his hon. friend would be also ready to acquit him of wishing for a revolution. His lordship thought, however, that his own course was to be preferred, because it tended to the correction of abuses; but the hon. individual, in his road, was more liable to maintain them. He believed, however, that they were both sincere well-wishers to their country, and that both would promote its prosperity to the utmost of their power. His lordship concluded by thanking the meeting for their patient hearing.

Admiral Lukin, in proposing the resolutions, said that they appeared to him to be so drawn up that few could dissent from them. He considered that it was needless for him to enter into any detailed explanation of them, after what had been addressed to them by the noble lord. The hon. and gallant officer said that he highly approved of the hundred disclaiming any participation in the proceedings of the late county meeting, *which was in fact no meeting at all*; and it had only been a matter of wonder to him that the High Sheriff *had not dissolved it*. With regard to the resolution upon the subject of reform, Admiral Lukin remarked, that *he had always been himself afraid of reform—he was afraid it should go too far*. He was, however, willing

to concede his opinion in this instance to the noble lord. The noble lord had told them that he was a Reformer and no Whig; now, he (Admiral Lukin) was a Whig and no Reformer.—(Hear and laughter.)

The following were the resolutions which were read by the noble Chairman.

Resolved, 1st.—That the first object in the proceedings of this Meeting be the most public and earnest disavowal we can make of all participation in the tumultuous and disorderly proceedings which took place at the late County Meeting held at Norwich, and the disgraceful result said to have attended them.

2d.—That this Meeting doth consequently disclaim entirely as a Petition of the County of Norfolk, a certain document said to have been voted on the occasion above mentioned, not only from their utter abhorrence of the *fraudulent and revolutionary doctrines* therein contained, but also from the personal knowledge and experience of numbers now present, that neither the Resolutions first moved, nor the Petition pretended to have been adopted, were understood or heard by nine parts out of ten of the individuals then assembled.

3d.—That this meeting is on the contrary fully impressed with the value of the existing structure of society and constitution under which we live, that they venerate and would uphold the just prerogatives of the Crown, respect the privileges of the Aristocracy, and contemplate no change in either the Civil or Religious Institutions, *except such as time and altered circumstances may have rendered needful in order to restore their original purity, and make them more effective of their purposed end.* In this sense, and in this only, would they gladly see their respective abuses corrected, and their defects supplied.

4th.—That with every feeling of attachment thus avowed to the whole Constitution of this country, this Meeting does nevertheless contemplate with horror and dismay the miseries in which the ruinous and uncontrolled system of national policy pursued for many years past has at length involved us, a system marked by

a course of public measures opposed to reason and humanity, and at variance with the general rights and interests of the people, by a Government swayed by patronage instead of public opinion, by a need-
less and profligate expenditure both of lives and treasure, and resulting as its natural fruits in the accumulation of a load of public burthens as unprecedented in their magnitude as they are intolerable in their pressure.

5th.—That little as the hope may be which past experience permits this meeting to entertain of any amelioration of the system of our general policy, or of any effectual relief to be obtained by petitioning a Parliament *so often implored in vain*, yet they feel it a duty to suggest what they conceive both the equity and justice of their case may fairly look for, and which even though now denied, they hope the good sense of the country, constitutionally exerted, will at no very distant period procure for them, namely, a more attentive regard to the wants and wishes of the people, a more severe economy to be pursued through every department of the public establishments, and also that the property of the public debt be made, as matter of strict necessity, like other property available towards supplying the public expenses of the state, either by a diminution of the interest now paid to the public creditor (but which if exacted in transactions between private individuals would be condemned as usurious by the laws), or by a direct tax upon the funds, the savings or proceeds in either case being applied in alleviation of those charges which press so partially and exclusively upon land, and especially to a relief of the whole duty upon Malt.

6th.—That every consideration this Meeting can give either to the primary causes or remedies of our national grievances, equally leads them to connect both their present sufferings and their appalling dread of future calamity with the disordered state of our National Representation, and to record it as their decided conviction, that to prevent revolution and to restore prosperity to this once envied kingdom, the members of the House of Commons must be *freely chosen by the People*, and become what the Constitution contemplates they should be—the zealous and undaunted Guardians of the People's Rights, and the

faithful dispensers of the Public Money.

7th.—That Petitions embodying the general sentiments contained in these Resolutions be presented to both Houses of the Legislature, viz. to the House of Lords by the Right Honourable Lord Suffield, and to the House of Commons by Thomas William Coke, Esq. as Member of the County.

The Rev. GEORGE GLOVER in seconding the resolutions proposed by the gallant Admiral, expressed the delight he felt that a hundred with which he was so closely and professionally connected, should be the first to disclaim all participation in the disgraceful and tumultuous proceedings of the late county meeting, which he had himself personally witnessed; and also in the most public manner to express their utter contempt and abhorrence of the doctrines contained in the document said to have been carried on that occasion; doctrines which tended immediately to annul the first principles of society, by dissolving every moral and religious obligation. He declared the principles laid down by the framer of the petition to be revolutionary in their most horrid and disgusting form. Out of the present evil, however, the Rev. Gentleman observed, good might arise, if the example of the hundred of North Erpingham, was followed throughout the county. At any rate he was perfectly sure that the feelings of the county, from one end to the other, accorded entirely with their own as to those proceedings. The inhabitants of the hundred were fully justified in what they were doing: they were very right not to leave it in the power of government to make a handle of those proceedings for abridging their liberties. There was no way better than the one that they were acting upon, for expressing the sense of the county. With regard to the original resolutions produced at the county meeting it was their misfortune to have given rise to

misconception. More particularly the one which spoke of the public debt. He was glad of an opportunity of at least palliating the censure which had fallen upon that resolution. It was but justice to the committee who drew up those resolutions to say, that they had expressed in words what they did not in reality mean. He did not mean to say but that the resolution as it stood would bear the construction which had been put upon it, and which had excited so much opposition. The committee had not intended any reduction of the debt itself, but only a reduction of the burdens which the debt created. This he knew to be the case. And having been favoured with a sight of the resolutions before the meeting, he had suggested to Mr. Watson that that part of the resolution was so worded that it might be misconstrued, and though the resolution stood in its original form, he knew that the part which alluded to it in the petition was marked out. The Committee meant nothing but what might be granted with equity and fairness to the fundholders. The Rev. Gentleman then proceeded to take a view of the advantages derived, as he said, by the fundholder from the alteration of the currency; and suggested, that it was scarcely fair that during all the distresses of the country the fundholder should be exacting the same interest in an improved currency, for what he bought in a depreciated one.—He said that the fundholder was in fact now receiving his 3*l*. interest upon what, in the average, he bought at 45, and could now dispose of for 80.—Upon what principle of equity could the fundholder object then, he would ask, to assist in finding means to alleviate the distress.—Mr. Glover then argued upon the power government had of reducing the interest, and brought forward the instance of Mr. Pelham having done it, to show that it was not without precedent. Great evils, he

said, it was foretold would arise from such a measure, but Mr. Pelham braved them all and reaped the advantage of his plan. The Rev. Gentleman expressed himself an advocate *for a tax upon the funds*, but not of the arbitrary and inquisitorial nature of the late tax upon property. He trusted that he should never see that again introduced, as it was very inimical to the morals of the people. He had been one of the commissioners, and he had been truly grieved to see the profligacy and fraud which it induced. *A tax upon the funded property acted in a less objectionable manner—so much was deducted from the interest before it was paid, and there was nothing inquisitorial in it.*—All taxes, Mr. Glover said, were to be considered in one point of view, namely, as so much money paid for the security of our lives and property. He could not, therefore, see why the fundholder should not pay for the security of his property equally with the proprietor of the soil. But now all the burdens fell upon the soil. Look at the church, it was supported by the land, but yet the fundholder could enjoy all the comforts which religion was supposed to give, and pay nothing. The same with the highways: the land had to keep them in repair, yet the fundholder could drive his carriage upon them; and enjoy them as his own, though not a farthing of the expenses came upon him. In like manner the public gaols—in them provision was made for the prisoner, but not by the fundholder; was it therefore in fairness or equity that he should be exempt from the expense of maintaining them? (*Hear, hear, and applause.*) Mr. Glover said, that it had been a subject of reproach against him, that he being a clergyman should interfere so much in politics. If he had ever supported the oppressor against the oppressed he would agree with those who made the objection, that it would be bet-

ter for him to have nothing to do with politics. If he had been an advocate for war instead of peace, then also he should agree that the less he had to do with them the better. If he had ever suffered party feeling to have an influence over his professional duties, then also he could agree with them. Whether this had been his conduct he was encircled by those who were the best able to judge. He would ask them rather, whether the whole bent of his mind had not been directed to support the weak against the strong—to advocate peace instead of war, in the little circle in which he had been placed: if he had their approbation he would brave the censure of the world.—For his part he had always considered that he had civil as well as religious duties to perform, and it had all along been his desire to discharge both to the best of his ability.—Gentlemen, (Mr. Glover proceeded) I should wish just to make one further observation, respecting a Whig and a Reformer. The Noble Lord in the chair does not choose to avow himself to be a Whig. I am, and you are I have no doubt also, quite satisfied that his Lordship shall be either Whig or Tory, if he only acts as he has done since he has been in this neighbourhood. I beg to observe to the Noble Lord, however, that I should be proud to call him a Whig. I would have his Lordship also remember that by being a Whig he need not cease to be a reformer. We have indeed a man amongst us, Mr Coke; *one who has nearly overwhelmed me with his kindness*; he is a Whig, and one of the old school. I wrote to him the other day, and told him we were about to have a meeting of the hundred. In jest I happened to say that I was afraid the resolutions would be too strong for him, as they introduced reform. Not perceiving that I was only in jest, he wrote to me the other day a

letter, of which I shall read you an extract.—“What, in the name of God, my dear friend, could induce you to think that I should object to the introduction of reform; I that have been a reformer all my life. I tell you again and again that we can never have justice done us without reform.”—(*Hear! hear! laughter and applause.*)—Mr. Glover said, that with regard to the noise and confusion that existed at the late county meeting, he could bear ample testimony to that fact; it was indeed a fact that so great was the uproar, that he had seen a report of a speech attributed to a certain individual, which appeared to be addressed to him; though not four yards from that individual, he could positively declare that he was not aware of such a speech having been addressed to him until he saw it in the public papers.

Several Gentlemen said that they could corroborate the statement of the Rev. Gentleman, as to the confusion which existed.

The resolutions were then put *seriatim* from the chair, and the six first were carried without a dissentient voice. Upon the seventh resolution being put, the following amendment, moved by Mr. Baker and seconded by Mr. Helsden, was carried unanimously:—

“That petitions embodying the general sentiments contained in the resolutions be presented to both Houses of the Legislature, viz. to the House of Lords by the Earl of Albemarle and Lord Suffield, and to the House of Commons by T. W. Coke, Esq. and Edm. Wodehouse, Esq. the County Members.”

The Rev. GEO. GLOVER said, that having seconded the resolutions in their original form, he begged to state that it was by no means his intention to show any disrespect to Mr. Wodehouse by omitting his name; he considered that it was paying Mr. Wodehouse

no compliment to request him to support a petition which, from the Honourable Member's generally expressed sentiments, it was evident he could not agree with.

LORD SUFFIELD said, he should beg to make one observation as chairman of the meeting. It had been remarked to him, that the requisition for convening the meeting had been signed only by persons resident in Cromer, and it had been held up as an objection to the meeting that none of the principal occupiers in the hundred had signed the requisition. He begged leave to inform those who had made the objection, that the readiest method had been resorted to by the inhabitants of the hundred for convening the meeting; and that the circumstance of the requisition containing the names of only residents of Cromer was in conformity with one of the new contrivances for regulating public meetings, which rendered it necessary that in giving notice to a magistrate of the intention to hold a meeting, the notice should be signed by six or eight persons residing in the place in which the meeting was intended to be held. He thought that the present was a most respectable meeting; and it was remarkable, that the resolutions appeared to be satisfactory to all parties.

The thanks of the meeting were moved by Mr. BAKER and seconded by Mr. CLARKE “to the Gentlemen of Cromer for the alacrity they had displayed in taking measures for convening the meeting, and giving us the means of expressing our sentiments.”

The Rev. Mr. GORDON moved the thanks of the meeting to Lord Suffield for “his kindness and attention as Chairman, and for the fair explanation which he has given us.”

The Rev. P. HUDSON seconded the motion, which was carried by acclamation.

Now I begin, and shall follow, as nearly as I can, the order in which the thing lies before me. First, you and Glover say that this is the proper way to contradict the petition of the County Meeting. It did not occur to you, then, that the nation would draw an opposite conclusion from this hole-and-corner meeting? Parson Glover says, that there can be no better way than this of expressing the sense of the county. You both declare that the whole county; that all the people in the county detest the petition. You call the petition a disgrace to the county. You say it has stained the county. You want it done away. You assert that the petition would not have been carried, if I had been heard out. All this you assert; and yet it never occurs to you to have *another County Meeting*. You know that the people of the county are all for you, and against me. You, wise Suffield, know this, you say, perfectly well. You know that the High Sheriff will, at any moment, call another County Meeting. And yet, oh! wise and sincere Suffield! you do not want a County Meeting: but a meeting at your "*own door*," as you yourself, stupidly enough, confessed; a meeting called by a parcel of

tradesmen at Cromer under your beck; a meeting consisting of yourself; a half-pay Admiral (of whom I believe even the county of Norfolk never heard before); of half a dozen parsons, and of a string of your own dependants, amongst whom, perhaps, your bailiff, gardener and gamekeeper, were the three most important personages! And this you think; this you, wise and sincere Lord Suffield, think the *best way* of wiping off, what you call the disgrace of the county! You knew well that I should not be in the barn, or in that barn you would not have been, any more than a mouse would have been in that barn in the presence of a cat. But what took you into a barn? Why did you need to house yourselves? Did not you understand your own law? You tell us that the requisition was signed only by people of Cromer because the law required such and such signatures. But if you assembled this meeting under the law, you might have met *out of doors*. Why did not you meet out of doors? Simply because you dared not. Because you well knew that, however private you tried to make the thing, people would have got together and outvoted you. So that yours is no

meeting, even of the hundred; it is a mere private meeting, to which you have given a false appellation. And this low, fraudulent thing: this little dirty, clandestine attempt, you have the vanity to think will tend to *throw odium upon me*; for that is the main object that you have had in view; and your reasons for which I shall clearly develope before I have done.

So much for the nature and character of the meeting. I should next bestow on you suitable chastisement for the very foul and singularly base aspersions on me which this report promulgates as having proceeded from your lips. The vile lie, that a report was in circulation, that persons like *Edwards* and *Castles*, were at the meeting; the viler lie, that it was likely that the framer of the petition would have expressed sentiments, giving countenance to the report; the ineffably base words, "*had Edwards been left to himself he would soon have worked his own downfall*:" these things, together with the passage *which you pretended to read from my writings*, and which you read, if you did read it, from some fabrication, and which you must also have known to be a fabrication; these things, if truly ascribed to you by

this newspaper, mark you out, as one of the meanest, one of the foulest, one of the vilest of mankind. I should be glad to find that all this baseness is due to the newspaper editor and not to you; I should be happy to be justified in announcing this to my readers; for if you really did utter these words; if you really did make the speech ascribed to you in this newspaper, you are a disgrace to your order; and your residence in it is a disgrace to the county of Norfolk. There is no room for evasion here. I am clearly designated in the speech. First, it is said that the *framer of the petition* might have been expected to express sentiments calculated to give colour to a report that persons like *Edwards* and *Castles* were at the meeting. And, then, the speech says, "*had Edwards been left to himself, he would soon have worked his own downfall*. Had the petition and all that a *certain individual* could have advanced in its favour been heard, I would have been content to have left it to the majority, whether they would support such doctrines." There is no shuffle that can avail here. It is I that clearly is meant; and, therefore, the utterer of this speech is slanderer, is liar, is the basest

and most dastardly man I ever heard of. If you did not make the speech, these appellations belong to the vile editor of the newspaper. Authorize me, if you like, to hang him up for public execration.

Of little consequence, however, is this base personality compared with what was said and what was resolved with regard to the doctrines of the petition; and with regard to the meeting at which the petition was passed. As to the latter, you are reported to have talked of the *confusion*, as if that confusion had been *created by me*. There is not too much of clearness in any part of the speech; but this part is particularly destitute of that quality. A third party, it says, comes and creates confusion. Was it meant to insinuate, that I created the confusion to *prevent myself from being heard*? Let us take the passage and see what we can make of it. The speech says, "I have received an account of a conversation, which actually was heard to take place at the meeting, and upon the credibility of my informant I have the greatest reliance. It was to this purport: *John, what do you get for making such a noise?*" The answer given was: *A shil-*

ling, and as much beer as I can drink. Now we know that "somebody must have *paid* for this beer, and some one must have given the shilling." It is not said, indeed, in the speech, that I paid for the beer and gave the shilling; but let us look at what goes just before. "It is a very natural conclusion for any one to come to, that *pay* had something to do with the tumult; and that a man, who, laying aside all feelings of honour and honesty, could, for a moment, publicly advocate a system of *paying nothing*, would be ready to *receive pay* for saying any thing, and for doing any thing." So that, out of the whole of this hubble-bubble stuff, if we are to draw any conclusion at all: if the words have any sense in them, they mean that I was paid for what I came to say; and that I paid others to prevent me from having an opportunity of saying it! You appear to have been frightened by the outcry of the infamous London press against the County of Norfolk; what ought, then, to be your fear, as to the effects which this Norfolk press will have upon your character? If you really did say what this editor ascribes to you; or, if he can ascribe it to you without

your contradicting it, what must be the opinion of the public! How bad, how wretched, how deplorable, how absolutely desperate and abandoned that cause must be, which can tempt men to adopt expedients so clumsy, and make them hazard assertions and insinuations so gross! An idiot would hardly fall into any thing so utterly contemptible. Was such a thing ever heard of before, as a man going a hundred miles to a county meeting, and then hiring people to prevent him being heard? This story, is of itself, quite enough to show the character of these hole-and-corner meetings. When such stories can be resorted to, falsehood must be at the bottom; to deceive must be the object; there cannot be any good motive at work, and there must be some very bad one.

I now come to what is of real importance; namely: the charges against the petition. This speech, attributed to you, calls it *fraudulent* and *infamous*; charges it with publicly advocating the subversion of society; calls it revolutionary; and says of it, several other things equally true. The *Irish* newspaper editors, who, standing at a distance, not coming in contact with me; and, therefore, more likely to judge

fairly between me and my enemies, have observed on these violent and outrageous attacks on the Norfolk petition; and this is what they have said: "We see a great deal of abuse of Mr. Cobbett; we observe endless and most virulent attacks upon his character. We see the Norfolk petition described as every thing which is vile and infamous; *but we no where can discover any attempt, no not even an attempt, to shew the falsehood of the facts or the injustice of the propositions in the Norfolk petition.* We cannot say that our own minds are decidedly made up with regard to so many and such important matters as this document brings under our view. But the author of it has been open, explicit, fair in all his proceedings; and he is too good a judge of the workings of the human mind, to suffer virulent attacks upon his personal character to excite alarms as to the fate of his principles." In better words I could not have answered you. Cease to *revile*; and, at least, attempt to answer. This you have not yet done; and your revilings I despise,

However, there are some falsehoods in the speech which it is

necessary to expose. The speech charges the petition with recommending a suspension of *all payments* for one year; and in another place it calls me an advocate for *paying nothing*. What an impudent falsehood! The petition proposes to suspend for one year, distress for rent, process for tithes, and processes arising out of mortgages, &c. &c. Is this suspending "*all payments*" for a year? Is this proposing a system for "*paying nothing*?" What an impudent falsehood, then, does this speech contain! Has not the landlord process enough for his rent, exclusive of that of distress? He can sue the tenant, even after this suspension of distrains has taken place. But, because I would prevent the farmer's bed from being taken from beneath his children by the severe process of distress, I am represented by this vile speech as openly advocating a system of paying nothing! If the law of distraint were repealed altogether, the landlord is then upon as good footing as other creditors. The law of distraint gives him a preference; it enables a bad landlord to commit acts of tyranny and cruelty; and because I would protect farmers from this tyranny and cruelty for one year, I am represented in this base speech

as openly advocating a system for paying nothing!

As to the process for tithes, it would take away the power of the clergy to oppress for one year; but it would not affect their *claim*. Their claim would remain what it was before. It would only, in short, do this, make them trust the farmers another year. Just the same in the case of the mortgagee. His hostile operations would only be suspended for a twelvemonth. His claim would remain what it was before; and no wrong whatever could possibly be done to any human being. The probabilities are, that all these parties would come to a compromise long before the year were out. The tenant would pay all he could to both landlord and parson. The mortgagee, finding himself restrained from doing an act of injustice, would be disposed to do what was just, because he would find it his interest thus to act. And, therefore, instead of preventing due payments, the suspension recommended by me would be the most likely thing in the world to produce them. And yet, this base speech; this most foul and most infamous speech, represents the petition as having prayed for a suspension of all payments, and as publicly ad-

vocating a system of *paying nothing!*

Another direct lie is, that the petition recommends to *dissolve all contracts*. Not one word upon the subject in the petition! A direct lie. The petition prays that a reform of the Parliament may take place, in order that such reform may lead to an equitable adjustment with regard to the public debt, and also, with regard to all debts and contracts between man and man. And this is what this lying speech calls a *dissolution of all contracts*, a breaking through of *all confidence*, a *destruction of all confidence* between man and man, a *dissolution of every contract* between man and man, and a *subversion of civil society!* What a fool, or what a hypocrite, must the man be that uttered these words; and if no man uttered them, what a fool or what a hypocrite must this hole-and-corner editor be!

The speech ascribed to you calls the petition *revolutionary*. A very pretty word; a very useful word in bringing your estates into jeopardy, but a very foolish word for you to make use of upon an occasion like this; and that for two reasons; first, because it conveys a *falsehood*; because the petition so far from being of a revolution-

ary tendency, expressly declares the strongest attachment to the present form of government, and also the fervent hope of the petitioners that it may descend to their children. This charge, therefore, is false; but, besides this, it is excessively foolish in you; for what do you say of the present system of government? Why you say that the present system of government is so entangled that it is *not able to afford you relief*; and that, therefore, "*our only hope is to effect an alteration in this system of government!*" And, yet, foolish man, you call my petition revolutionary! Oh! but you qualify this. You do not, you say, allude to "*forcible resistance*." And who said any thing about resistance at all? You would have a "*constitutional resistance*." But here you are amongst revolution, at any rate. You are for effecting something of a revolutionary kind; and yet you cry out revolutionary at my petition, that has no sentiment of the sort in it! And how do you characterise the government? You call it, in your fourth resolution, "a system marked by "*a course of public measures, opposed to reason and humanity, and at variance with the general rights and interests of the people*;" you call it a government

"*swayed by a needless and prodigal expenditure, both of lives and of treasure.*" You say that there must be a reform to prevent a revolution. You and a yellow admiral and six parsons say all this. You say all this unanimously. You vote it without one dissenting voice; and yet you have the impudence, or the hypocrisy, or both, to affect to regard the county petition as revolutionary.

However, we shall have a proof of your sincerity and honesty when we come to your proposition for a reduction of the interest of the debt. But let us first see how sincere you are about *reform*; and especially *how soon* you have an idea that we shall have that thing; and this will give us a pretty specimen of the logic that you carry about in your head. First you tell us that taxation is the cause of the distress. That is position the first: taxation is the cause of distress. The *remedy*, you say, is *very plain*; namely, a diminution of taxation! So far, so good, all is as clear as day-light. Taxation is the cause of the evil, and reduction of taxation the remedy. Well, what is next? Why, that from a Parliament "constituted as the present is, *that remedy is not to be expected.*" The devil! Why then we must get rid

of this Parliament, or we can have no relief! Now, let us stop here a bit. My petition contains no folly of this sort. It does not lie. The framer of it saw the Parliament take off nearly four millions of taxes last year; and the petition prays the Parliament, even constituted as it is, to take off more taxes. It does not contain a silly falsehood like this in your speech; and your speech is belied even by your own resolutions, for one of these resolutions proposes to pray for a large reduction of taxation, and even for a reduction of the interest of the debt. So that this speech is all silliness as well as falsehood. The county would, indeed, have been disgraced, if it had passed a petition upon grounds like these.

But, to return to you as a "*reformer*;" let us see when you expect your reform to take place. You are for a "*constitutional resistance*," a delightfully silly expression; but this is what you are for; and then comes out your remedy. "It is on this account I would wish to *keep alive* the *feeling* for reform." Keep alive! Keep alive a feeling, too! And how long do you mean to keep it alive? How long do you mean to dandle and to nurse it?

We want the reform; for you tell us that taxation is the cause of the distress; that diminution of taxation is the only remedy; and that we cannot have that diminution without reform. You are a pretty comforter, then, to tell us that you wish to *keep alive* the feeling for reform. You are really one of those reformers, who, like the Westminster Rump, do not want reform itself; but *want the want* of reform. "I would never," say you, let slip an "opportunity of introducing the subject." Introducing the subject! Why man, we want *the thing*: we want the reform: we do not want any more talking about it at all: we have petitioned for it; and we have made it, that which you so exceedingly dislike; namely, *the condition of our assenting to a reduction of the interest of the debt*. You would have the subject constantly introduced; and for what? Why, "in order that, when the time shall come for electing your representatives, the public mind may be fully prepared to support only such persons as are favourable to a reform in Parliament!" So! here we have it all out, then! Here is the grand remedy. At the next election, which may not take place for near-

ly *four years to come*: at the next election, when all the present race of farmers will have become beggars or labourers, we are to choose for *our representatives* such persons as are favourable to a reform in Parliament! Why, if we can choose our representatives, if we have the *power* of choosing what persons we please; if it is not downright idiot-like nonsense to tell us that our remedy lies in choosing the reformers: if this is not downright idiot-like nonsense, what need have we of any reform at all? If we can choose whom we please, we need no reform; and if we cannot choose whom we please, this speech is such as might have been expected from a driveller or an idiot. However, here we have a most complete proof that you are much about as much of a reformer as was the old Lord who had the profligacy to state in his will, in the *name of God, Amen*, that he left his son-in-law *five thousand pounds to purchase him a seat in Parliament!* Much about as good a reformer are you as that old Lord was; for here it comes out clearly that you expect another four years to take place without any thing at all being done; and we have here your reprobation of my petition, which con-

templates no reduction of the debt until there be a reform.

Your pretty doctrine about resistance and the French revolution, are curiously enough brought in; with no other apparent intention than that of *frightening* us away from Reform altogether. You tell us that the blood of thousands was spilt to obtain "what appeared so desirable, the overthrow of the people's oppressors. But what was gained in their stead? A *despot*. Afterwards, indeed, that despot was beaten, but with him the country was beaten also; and the French have now the *Bourbons* back again." Yes, but you forgot to tell your hearers in the barn at Cromer, you forgot to tell this enlightened hole-and-corner assembly, you forgot to tell them, that though the French have got the *Bourbons* back again, they have not got back again the tithes, the parsons, the cruel road duties, the cruel salt duties, the tyrannical game laws, the petty village tyrants; but that above all things, the revolution ridded them of the tithes; and took the *church property* and sold it to pay off the debt. You forgot to tell them these things; you suppressed these things; and you suppressed also the very important fact, that

agriculture is now flourishing in France; that the French farmers are now more prosperous than at any former period of the history of that country; and that, though the country was beaten as you call it, it is already in a state to go to war and to set us at defiance. The French revolution had nothing at all to do with your subject. The county petition had proposed nothing revolutionary. It had distinctly expressed sentiments and prayers the contrary of revolutionary. You had no need to mention the French revolution at all; but since you chose to mention it, you ought to have mentioned it truly and fairly. When you were speaking of its *results*, you should not have stopt at merely observing that the French had got the *Bourbons* back again. This shows the danger of meeting in a barn; or, at least, it shows the danger of making in a barn, speeches that afterwards get into print. You should have kept the whole thing snugly in the barn; for, in barns, there is no *sanctity*; no *privilege* to shelter stupidity. In a barn your nonsense is no more sacred than that of a methodist parson or a strolling player. Therefore, when it comes into your head to talk of the *French revolution*

again, do not talk of it in a barn. Talk of it in a place that will screen your nonsense from the ridicule of the public.

I now come to the main thing of all; namely, the Reduction of the interest of the Debt. You, or at least, the base and lying speech ascribed to you, calls my petition *fraudulent*; it calls it *infamous*; it says that it proposes to *put an end to all payments*; it asks what is to become of *widows and others*. After this comes PARSON GLOVER. He goes on in the same strain, and, in the course of his speech, he takes upon him to say that the Committee who drew up the resolutions, which my petition set aside at the County Meeting, did not mean "any reduction of the *debt itself*, but only a reduction "of the burdens which the debt "created. *This he knew to be the "case.*" Well, then, and what was this; the resolution did not mean to *reduce the debt*; but it did mean to *reduce the burdens created by the debt*! Here is a pretty parson for you! Could OLD LOYOLA beat this? The resolution did not mean to *reduce* the interest of the debt. Oh, no! It only meant to reduce, that is to say, to *take away, the means of paying the interest of the debt.*

However, this shocking hypo-

crisy, though almost without a parallel, sinks out of sight when we come to look at the resolutions proposed at this Barn Meeting, and carried unanimously. The second resolution declares my petition to be fraudulent; and the fourth resolution proposes a *downright robbery of the fundholder. A base robbery. A real fraud. A scandalous, a cheating, a downright roguish measure.* I propose, first a reform of the Parliament; next an appropriation of a part of the property, commonly called Church Property, to the *liquidation of the debt*; next, a great reduction of the Standing Army, and a total abolition of Sinecures and the like; next, a sale of the public estates, commonly called Crown Lands, and an application of the money towards the liquidation of the Debt. Thus, I would first actually liquidate a very large part of the debt; that is to say, I would pay it off with public property which is now, in my opinion, made a bad use of; and when I had done that, I would do, *what*? Not commit *fraud*; not commit *robbery*; but I would have, in the words of the petition, "*An equitable adjustment with regard to the "public Debt.*" This is what I propose. This is what the County

of Norfolk has petitioned for. Now let us see what your hole-and-corner, what your Barn Meeting prays for. These are the words, "That the property of the public debt be made available towards supplying the public expenses of the State, either by a *diminution of the interest* now paid to the public creditor, or by a *direct tax* upon the funds."

That there may be no doubt as to the meaning here, the Rev. PARSON GLOVER comes, and he says this:—"The Rev. Gentleman expressed himself an advocate for a *tax upon the funds*." After this he takes very good care to say that he does not mean that there should be a tax upon other property. "He did not mean (he said) the arbitrary and inquisitorial late tax upon property. He trusted that he should never see that again, as it was very *inimical to the morals of the people*." Oh, wretched parson! very inimical to the people's morals, because it took from the landlord and the parson in the same degree that it took from the fundholder! That was an inquisitorial tax: and he had been grieved to see the profligacy and fraud that it produced! The fraud must have been with those who had the property; and so, in order to pre-

vent them from committing fraud again, the Rev. GLOVER would rob the fundholders. He goes on to say, "a tax upon funded property acted in a *less objectionable manner*." Aye, to be sure! less objectionable to the landlord and the PARSON; but by no means less objectionable to the fundholder. "*So much* was deducted from the interest before it was paid, and there was nothing *inquisitorial*!" No, nothing inquisitorial, to be sure: no questions to be asked the fundholder, certainly; it is only a robbing of him of so much, that is all.

The PARSON thinks himself bound to give some reason for this proposition. And accordingly, he observes that all taxes ought to be considered as so much money paid for the security of our lives and property. "He could not see, therefore, why the fundholder should not pay for the security of his property, *equally with the proprietor of the soil*." And does he not already do this, PARSON? What tax is there of which the fundholder does not pay his full share? Point me out one tax, if you can, which the landlord or parson has to pay and from which the fundholder is exempted. "Look at the *Church*," (says PARSON GLOVER) it is

“ supported by the land, but yet
 “ the fundholder can enjoy all
 “ the *comforts of religion!*” So,
 then, you regard the church ex-
 penses in the light of a tax, do
 you? This is very good. Dr.
 LANGTON, in his speech at Mr.
 COKE’S hole-and-corner meeting
 at WALSINGHAM, held a precisely
 contrary doctrine. He said that
 the church property was not pub-
 lic property at all. He had not read
 my *Sermon on Parsons and Tithes*.
 But here, we have the Rev. GLOVER,
 avowing that the church is main-
 tained by something in the nature
 of a *tax!* This being the case, we
 may, surely, petition for a *reduc-*
tion of this tax, as well as for the
 reduction of any other tax: and,
 when the fundholder is told, that
 he is to have part of his income
 taken away, because the *land* has
 to support the *church*, his answer
 will, doubtless be, “ *Take away*
 “ *the church tax*, if you like, and
 “ do not rob me. Do not lay
 “ upon me a property-tax, from
 “ which you are exempt; and
 “ then tell me it is to pay for the
 “ *comforts I receive from reli-*
 “ *gion*. Do not add the basest
 “ of hypocrisy to the most scan-
 “ dalous robbery.” Mr. GLOVER
 has here demolished the whole of
 the doctrine, relating to the divine
 right of the church. He takes

the expenses of the church to be
 in the nature of a tax; and leaves
 us to conclude, of course, that we
 have a right to pray for a reduc-
 tion of that tax.

But, to return to the important
 point. Here is Admiral LUKIN,
 proposing; and here are you and
 six parsons, supporting a proposi-
 tion for reducing the interest of
 the debt; either by express re-
 duction, or by a tax upon the
 funds; here are you praying to
 have this done; and without pro-
 posing to liquidate, first, any part
 of the debt, by means of church
 property or by means of crown
 lands; here are you and this Ad-
 miral and these parsons, for let-
 ting the church and the aristo-
 cracy keep all that they have
 been able to get at; and are pro-
 posing, at the same time, to rob
 the fundholder, to rob the wi-
 dow, to rob the orphan, to rob
 the Savings’ Banks’ people, to
 rob the Friendly Societies; to
 rob, in short, every creature de-
 pendent upon the funds, without
 taking one single farthing from
 the aristocracy or the church, even
 one farthing, towards making up
 for that which that aristocracy
 and that church have received out
 of the loans which constitute
 the debt! Monstrous wickedness!
 Injustice, cruelty, bare-faced

roguery, without a parallel. The speech imputed to you, and that imputed to the Rev. GLOVER, call my petition fraudulent; call it immoral; call it roguish. Let us hear, then, what this petition says. It says, that it is well known, "That the particular families received for many years, large emoluments out of the money *borrowed from the fundholders*; that during that period, more than a million of money was *taken out of the loans to be given to the church*; and, therefore, your petitioners will not suppose it possible for your Honourable House to harbour an intention to *take even a single shilling from the fundholders*, so long as these families shall continue to receive those emoluments, and so long as a part of the public property, commonly called Church Property, *shall not be applied to the liquidation of the debt.*" And this is what you call *fraudulent*! This is what you call dishonesty! This is what you call a *breach of faith*! This is what you call a destruction of all confidence; while you yourselves have the audacity; or, at least while the hole-and-corner reporter, puts into your mouths speeches which have the unprincipled audacity,

to recommend to take away a part of the property of the fundholders, without taking away one shilling of the emoluments of the particular families, and without making the church even pay back the sums which it has received out of the loans!

More than a year ago I addressed a letter upon this subject to the Radicals. It was Register No. 21 of volume 40, and dated on the 8th of December 1821. It was intitled thus: "On the necessity of preparing in time for an opposition to any measure that may be brought forward for the reducing of the Interest of the National Debt; unless such measure be preceded by a Reform of the Parliament." In that and a succeeding Register, I laid down all the principles which pervade the Norfolk petition. I then asked, whether it were possible that any man could have the impudence to propose a reduction of the interest of the debt without first demanding a repayment by the church, of the money which it had received out of the loans. I now find that there are people, who have not only the impudence to make such a proposition, but who have the greater impudence to accuse of roguish intentions those who would make the

church contribute to the liquidation of the debt.

Thus, Lord SUFFIELD, your hole-and-corner meeting stands pretty well exposed. The unprincipled propositions, and the stupid phraseology of your resolutions form a striking contrast to the honesty, the sincerity, the plain dealing, and the clearness of expression contained in the petition of the county of Norfolk, which petition is all fairness, reasonableness, justice and frankness from the beginning to the end. In the little review that I have just taken, we clearly see the grounds of the malice contained in your speech. The ground; the main ground is this, that I am resolved, that you shall *not reduce the interest of the debt*; that you shall not do this thing *before* there be a reform of the Parliament; that you shall not reduce the interest of the debt, while the particular families retain the present enormous emoluments, and while the church retains that which it received *out of the loans*. What! shall this church receive more than a million of money out of the loans? Shall it keep this money; shall it not pay it back to help liquidate the debt; shall it keep all its enormous wealth; shall the crown lands remain enjoyed as

they now are? But, above all things, shall the church retain the money that it got out of the loans; and shall those who lent the money be mulct of their interest? A proposition so impudent; so outrageously roguish, never was before made in this world. The barn in which you assembled may have seen, in its time, bands of strolling players, and gangs of gypsies within its doors; but never did it witness within its oaken sides, a band so profligately dishonest as that which it witnessed on the 17th of January; that is to say, if the hole-and-corner newspaper reporter give a true account of your proceedings.

One more remark, and then I dismiss this hole-and-corner meeting. You are reported to have said, in the outset of your speech, that the "*public press*" had been abusing the county of Norfolk, and making a laughing stock of it, from the day of the passing of the petition. Whether you have mended the matter, we have seen above; but what a stupid observation was this! By the public press, you mean half a dozen trading companies in London, who, as the Irish newspapers very truly observe, abuse the petition merely because it was drawn up by Mr. COBBETT! This is the

fact; and this fact you ought to have known. You ought to have known, that no success can attend me, which does not do injury to these vile wretches of the London press. This, if the report of the speech be true, you wanted the sense to perceive. But, there were doubtless other motives besides this truckling to the scandalous press of the metropolis. Your pride was wounded. You remembered the lash I so justly laid upon you, when you refused to accompany me, in carrying an address to the Queen. That was one thing. Then you did not forget, doubtless, your connexions with the church, and with the other good things mentioned in the petition. I shall not be particular about these at present. Particulars are reserved to be uttered to your *face*, when the *county* shall again assemble; and when these hole-and-corner meetings will doubtless receive the reprobation which is their due. In conclusion, I beg the reader to bear in mind the propositions of this hole-and-corner meeting relative to the *interest of the debt*. This hole-and-corner meeting proposes to *diminish the interest*, or to *tax the funds*; and it proposes that nothing shall be contributed by the aristocracy or by the

church. The county petition proposes no such base and dastardly robbery. It proposes to make the aristocracy and the church contribute, in the first place, towards a liquidation of a part of the debt. It proposes to pay off honestly, as far as we have the means of *paying off*; and then it proposes to make an "*equitable adjustment*" as to the remainder. I beseech the reader to bear this in mind; and to bear in mind, also, that the anger, the malice, the rage, the fury of the hole-and-corner people, against me, arises from this; that they see me resolved to prevent, if I can, any reduction of the interest of the debt, until there be a reformed Parliament to lop off the emoluments of the particular families, to make the church contribute, to bring the crown-lands to assist in the liquidation. What all these hole-and-corner people want is; or, at least, what the leaders of them want, is, to reduce the interest of the debt, without calling upon the other parties to bear the smallest share of the loss; and they would cut my throat, because they see me resolved to prevent, if I can, this daring and cruel robbery. What! am I to consent to take away the money of the saving-banks' peo-

ple, and to let the church keep the money that it has had given to it out of the loans? While there is ink and paper, and while I have a hand to make a mark, or a tongue to make myself heard, such an act of atrocious dishonesty and cruelty never shall pass uncensured. This is my determination; and I am not at all afraid but I shall have ninety-nine hundredths of the community with me.

I cannot conclude without expressing my admiration of the conduct of Mr. ARCHDEACON BATHURST. He has published a letter, in which he manfully calls for another COUNTY MEETING. He expresses his contempt of the hole-and-corner meetings. He knows well how they are got up. He knows that it is a little junto assembled at the command, and under the nod, of a master. He accordingly says, that they will have no effect in setting aside the county petition. He wishes that petition to be rescinded; but, to do that, he says must be the work of a county meeting. I agree with him in this; though I am certain that the county would confirm what they have already done; and, therefore, I am anxious for such meeting.

WM. COBBETT.

HOLE-AND-CORNER MEETINGS IN NORFOLK.

[From "*The STATESMAN*" daily
Evening Newspaper.]

LORD SUFFIELD has been holding a hole-and-corner meeting in a barn. "*Silent in the Senate, eloquent in the Barn.*" The nonsense and falsehoods imputed to this BARN-ORATOR will find full notice in the next Register. Much greater malignity we never witnessed than is to be found in the speech imputed to this Lord upon this occasion. Still, however, the stupidity exceeds the falsehood and the malice. How the OWLS must have laughed while they surveyed and listened to this ORATOR. There were one LORD, one half-pay ADMIRAL, six PARSONS, how many GAME KEEPERS, GARDENERS and FOOTMEN, we cannot say, and a parcel of people from the town of CROMER. This assembly voted "by acclamation," that Mr. COBBETT's petition was *fraudulent and revolutionary*; but they also voted, by acclamation, that "*the interest*

of the debt ought to be reduced ;" and that, too, without any corresponding sacrifice made by any other part of the community.— Mr. COKE, also, has been presiding at a hole-and-corner meeting, in the Hundred of NORTH GREENHOE. At this meeting a high scene took place. There was a great debate as to whether the subject of reform should be introduced or not ; but, at last, it was decided that it should, and then three parsons, with several others, who had been the most zealous in supporting the condemnation of the county petition, decamped and left Mr. COKE and the rest of the meeting to go on. They, at last, agreed upon a petition disavowing the county petition, praying for a great reduction of taxes, great reduction of army, abolition of sinecures and reform of parliament. There had been, before this, a petition proposed by the parson-side of the meeting. And it had been seconded by a REV. DOCTOR LANGTON, who abused Mr. COBBETT very much for having called church property public property. This petition of the parsons, had, in it, the following passage: " far be it from your petitioners to look for remedy, in the confiscation of the revenues, or any part thereof of the church."—

Monstrous good ! But, in the petition which was finally agreed upon, this passage was *left out !* The parsons were now gone away ; so this passage was left out, and a prayer for reform of parliament clapped in, in its stead ! If any body had been there to propose Mr. COBBETT's petition, it would have been carried to a certainty. We may add, that even in the parson's petition, there is a prayer for taking off part of the *assessed taxes and the whole of the malt tax.* The parsons say further, that the "*Sinking Fund* is maintained, as " appears to them, for no other " purpose than to afford a *bonus* " *to the fundholder*, at the expense of the impoverished " landowner." They further say, that " *there is a multiplication* " *of salaried commissioners ; a* " standing army, unprecedented " in numbers, during a state of " profound peace, and *unconstitutional as it is burdensome and* " *expensive !*" Bravo, parsons ! Come, take breath a little ! " A " profusion of pensions and sinecures, *pertinaciously adhered* " *to*, that are not merited by " public services !" Oh, God ! have we lived to hear this from the church ! Come, at it again : " A CIVIL LIST, (Oh, Lord !) " and the pay and salaries of

“the servants and dependants of
 “the state, throughout every of-
 “fice of government, continued
 “upon a scale of wanton extra-
 “vagance entirely disproportioned
 “to the altered value of money
 “and distressed condition of the
 “country.”—Well, if this be not
 a change, let them tell us what a
 change is. The whole of this was
 supported by the REV. DOCTOR
 LANGTON; so that the church is
 in an improving way.—As we ob-
 served before, the parsons went
 off, when the amended petition
 was introduced; but, before they
 went, the meeting appears to have
 been pretty nearly ready to come
 to fisty cuffs. It divided, at any
 rate. It was called by two ma-
 gistrates, Mr. COKE and Dr. LANG-
 TON. Dr. LANGTON dissolved the
 meeting, as far as he could; so
 that this hole-and-corner affair
 became a pretty thing at last.
 Mr. COKE will find, before he has
 done, that his best way would have
 been to obey his constituents, ac-
 cording to those principles which
 he has been professing all his
 life.

HEREFORDSHIRE PETITION.

I SAID, in my last Register, that
 ten days always dissipated any
 mass of falsehoods that the Lon-
 don press could vomit forth against
 me. I now find, that the petition
 of Mr. CHARLTON which the Lon-
 don papers represented as having
 been carried in preference to
 mine, has dropped dead, like a
 bit of dirty paper falling out of a
 window into the street. As late
 as Saturday night last, it had not
 been signed, either by the Noble
 Chairman, or by any other per-
 son whatever! This petition was
*not passed. It was never put in
 the negative.* The confusion which
 was made to prevent me from be-
 ing heard in reply, actually drove
 the Lord-Lieutenant from the
 chair; and he dissolved the meet-
 ing before any petition at all was
 regularly put and carried; a thing
 which he was perfectly justified in
 doing by the violence which was

made use of to interrupt the proceedings. Nobody, I understand, will sign Mr. CHARLTON's petition; but the petition which I proposed to the meeting will, in all probability, come before the Parliament, regularly and numerously signed. It is, I understand, now circulating through the county for signatures; and, if Mr. CHARLTON have a mind to try his strength against it, let him send his petition round for signatures. We shall then see which was really the petition of the meeting.

MARKETS.

Average Prices of CORN throughout ENGLAND, for the week ending 18th January.

Per Quarter.		s.	d.
Wheat	40	10	
Rye	22	11	
Barley	28	7	
Oats	17	6	
Beans	26	1	
Peas	30	4	

Corn Exchange, Mark Lane.

Quantities and Prices of British Corn, &c. sold and delivered in

this Market, during the week ended Saturday, 18th January.

	Qrs.	£.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Wheat	4,431 for	9,848	9	5	Average,	44 5
Barley	2,541	3,924	15	3		30 10
Oats	4,157	44,55	0	4		21 5
Rye	—	—	—	—		—
Beans	670	893	0	3		26 7
Peas	347	536	0	4		30 10

SMITHFIELD, Monday, Jan. 27th.

Per Stone of 8 pounds (alive).

	s.	d.	s.	d.
Beef	3	0	to	4 0
Mutton	3	0	—	3 6
Veal	4	0	—	5 0
Pork	3	4	—	3 8
Lamb	0	0	—	0 0

Beasts ... 2,936 | Sheep ... 22,630
Calves 120 | Pigs 220

NEWGATE (same day).

Per Stone of 8 pounds (dead).

	s.	d.	s.	d.
Beef	2	4	to	3 2
Mutton	2	4	—	3 0
Veal	3	0	—	5 0
Pork	2	8	—	4 0
Lamb	0	0	—	0 0

City, Jan. 29, 1823.

BACON.

This article continues steady at last week's prices; but very little doing.—26s. to 27s. on board.—Landed, 30s. to 32s.

BUTTER.

The change in the weather has caused great disappointment to the Butter holders, as it leaves them almost without hope of getting rid of the inferior kinds (which are four-fifths of the whole stock) during the present season. There is no demand but for the best qualities; and upon the whole the trade is in as bad a state as we ever remember it.—Carlow, (Fine) 80s. to 82s.—Dublin and Waterford, 70s.—Newry, 72s. to 74s.—Belfast, 76s. to 78s.—Cork and Limerick, 68s. to 70s.—Dutch, none.

CHEESE.

It would be quite in vain to endeavour to quote prices for this article: they are entirely *nominal*.

Price of HOPS, per Cwt. in the BOROUGH.

New Bags.

Kent.....	£ 2 5—£ 4 0
Sussex.....	2 0— 2 10
Essex.....	— —
Yearling Bags..	25s.—35s.

New Pockets.

Kent.....	£ 2 10—£ 4 0
Sussex.....	2 5— 2 16
Essex.....	2 10— 3 16
Farnham.....	5 12— 6 10
Yearling Pockets,	25s.—40s.

Maidstone, Jan. 23.—Our Hop trade remains in the same dull state as last advised. We do not hear of any sales whatever,